REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated

August 19, 2009. Claims 1 to 5, 6 to 9 and 11 to 15 are pending in the application, of which

Claims 1, 11, 14 and 15 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are

respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 3, 8, 11, 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S.

Published Appln. No. 2001/0046065 (Furukawwa) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,134,568

(Tonkin), and in further view of U.S. Published Appln. No. 2001/0044868 (Roztocil). Claims 4,

5, 7, 9, 10, 13 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Furukawa in view of Tonkin,

and in further view of Roztocil and U.S. Published Appln. No. 2003/0206314 (Tanimoto).

Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Furukawa and Tonkin in view of Roztocil,

and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,128,451 (Fukuchi). Reconsideration and withdrawal of

these rejections are respectfully requested.

The present claims concern an apparatus or method that displays a process flow

list for a plurality of procedures of a printing job. The procedures are included in a printing job

and may be executed on a combination of devices in sequence or by a user in order to satisfy the

requirements of the printing job wherein a procedure to be performed next is emphatically

displayed in the process flow list. Such a display list with the next procedure displayed in an

emphasized manner allows a user who has instructed the printing job to easily confirm or

understand the status and the sequence of the process flow used to execute the printing job using

the combination of devices.

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 1 is directed to a

printing control apparatus which performs a printing process employing a plurality of printing

devices. The apparatus includes a printing attribute acquisition unit configured to acquire an attribute of a printing job to be processed; an adaptive environment determination unit configured to obtain a device combination capable of executing the printing job based on performance information representing at least performance of each of the plurality of printing devices and the acquired attribute of the printing job, the device combination including a first device and a second device which executes a process using a print product printed by the first device; and a display unit configured to display a process flow list representing a process flow to execute the printing job by employing the device combinations obtained by the adaptive environment determination unit and an operation to be performed by a user in the second device. The process flow list is a list in which a plurality of procedures which constitute the printing job are listed in the order of execution, and wherein the plurality of procedures include a work procedure in which a user moves the print product printed by the first device from the first device to the second device and process procedures to be performed by respective devices included in the device combination obtained by the adaptive environment determination unit. The display unit displays, emphatically in the process flow list, a procedure which is to be performed next, among the plurality of procedures.

Applicants submit that the cited references, namely Furukawa, Tonkin, Roztocil and Tanimoto, whether considered alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the features of Claim 1. In particular, the cited references, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest at least the feature of a display unit that displays a process flow list representing a process flow to execute the printing job by employing device combinations obtained by an adaptive environment determination unit and an operation to be performed by a user in a second device, wherein the process flow list is a list in which a plurality of procedures

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which constitute a printing job are listed in the order of execution, and wherein the plurality of procedures include a work procedure for moving the printing product printed by a first device from the first device to the second device by a user and process procedures to be performed by respective devices included in the device combination obtained by the adaptive environment determination unit, and wherein the display unit displays, emphatically in the process flow list, a procedure which is to be performed next, among the plurality of procedures.

In contrast to the present claims, Furukawa merely describes a host computer 1 that searches network printers for one or more network printers which satisfy conditions required to print specific print data. The host computer generates an information list 10 generated by a including locations and speeds of available printers. The information list 10 is displayed and a user can select one or more desired printers to execute printing using the print data. As clearly described in Paragraph [0097] of Furukawa, the selected printers execute the same procedure in parallel. However, the manner in which the printers are displayed is not related at all to an execution order nor is the manner of display related to the use of combined devices in order to complete a printing job as featured in the present claims. Accordingly, Furukawa fails to disclose or suggest obtaining a device combination in which a first and second printing devices are included as well as displaying a process flow list representing a process flow to execute the printing job by employing the device combinations and an operation to be performed by a user in the second device.

Furthermore, Tonkin discloses a computer system 150 displaying a preview display of a document to be printed. The preview display merely shows a composition of a page such as a front page of a printed document with positions at which the printed document is to be bound. However, a user cannot recognize, from the displayed composition, when they should

bind the document. As such, Tonkin fails to disclose or suggest displaying a process flow list representing a process flow to execute the printing job by employing device combinations and an operation to be performed by a user in a second device as featured in Claim 1.

In addition, Roztocil discloses a production output device that signals an operator if a manual intervention is required to execute unsupported page features. For example, the production output device directs the operator to remove partially finished documents from the production output device and transfer the removed partially finished documents to a binding machine. That is, Roztocil suggests directing or signaling the manual operation to the operator by displaying message strings or outputting voice messages. However, since Roztocil does not disclose how the production output device directs the manual intervention to the operator, it cannot be said that Roztocil discloses or suggests obtaining a device combination in which a first and second printing devices are included as well as displaying a process flow list representing a process flow to execute the printing job by employing the device combinations and an operation to be performed by a user in the second device as featured in Claim 1.

In the Office action, it is contended that Tanimoto discloses a work procedure which is in progress or is to be performed next is emphatically displayed to present the current process status. Applicants respectfully disagree with such a characterization of Tanimoto. Applicants submit Tanimoto does not disclose or suggest emphatically displaying the next procedure in a process flow list. In a workflow table 5 shown in Fig. 2A of Tanimoto, there is no highlighted or emphasized part in the process flow list. Applicants further submit that a "STATUS" field in the workflow table 5 is not a part of a process flow list in which a plurality of procedures which constitute the printing job are listed in the order of execution. The "STATUS"

field of Tanimoto is separate from the process flow list and exclusively used to show the current status of the process flow.

Finally, Fukuchi merely discloses informing a user of an absence or shortage of toner if it detected by a toner sensor 7. Nothing in Fukuchi discloses or suggests a display unit that displays a process flow list representing a process flow to execute the printing job by employing device combinations obtained by an adaptive environment determination unit and an operation to be performed by a user in a second device, wherein the process flow list is a list in which a plurality of procedures which constitute a printing job are listed in the order of execution, and wherein the plurality of procedures include a work procedure for moving the printing product printed by a first device from the first device to the second device by a user and process procedures to be performed by respective devices included in the device combination obtained by the adaptive environment determination unit, and wherein the display unit displays, emphatically in the process flow list, a procedure which is to be performed next, among the plurality of procedures.

In light of the deficiencies of cited references as discussed above, Applicants submit that independent Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

Independent Claims 11, 14 and 15 are directed to a method, a computer-readable medium and a computer program product , respectively, substantially in accordance with the apparatus of Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claims 11, 14 and 15 are also now in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable over the cited art for at

least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each dependent claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

<div align="center">CONCLUSION</div>

The Director is authorized to charge the $1,110.00 three-month extension to Deposit Account No. 50-3939. The Director is further authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 06-1205.

No claim fees are believed due; however, should it be determined that additional claim fees are required, the Director is hereby authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account 06-1205.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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